THE GRATITUDE OF OLGA

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Peterson sat, lazily sketching in the outline of the distant ruin, and trying to make up his mind whether to settle down in dead earnest at his bit of landscape or give it up and go off on a spree with Mrs. Peterson. He stopped a moment, to refill his pipe, and then leaned back against the tree and crossed his legs.

"Matilda," he said finally, after gazing at the little cottage to the right for some short space of time, "just look at that girl work. I never saw such industry. And she's the pink of neatness, too."

"And," commented Mrs. Peterson, "she works all day and almost all night, too. Twice I woke up last night and heard her in the buttery, working away."

"She's worth two of our Maggie—over home," sighed Peterson.

"Six," returned his young wife, in a determined tone of voice.

Peterson was an art leaguer and an artist. His specialty was landscapes of a very particular kind. And he had to go to very particular places to get his particular kind of landscape. It happened therefore that he was summering in Hungary—real Hungary—and at a farm house where he could wear what he pleased and do what he pleased.

"Nothing to do," he told his wife, "but paint away like mad. But I don't know," he continued reflectively, "why I couldn't do this back in Jersey. I could, if it weren't for that big blank wall of mountain over there, and the ruin, and the funny little cots——"

"And Olga," added young Mrs. Peterson.

"Olga—to be sure," returned Peterson, his glance once more returnng gratefully to the girl who was working

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away in the cottage garden. He raised his voice.

"Oh, Olga!" he exclaimed. The girl rose, answered his call and came tripping blithely toward him.

"Olga," he said, speaking to her in her native tongue, "you could Frau Ollendorf to tell, our dinner out here under this big tree to have. If so be it too much trouble is——"

But the girl laughingly shook her head, and replied vivaciously that it would be no trouble at all. She would be pleased to comply with the request. So, that being settled, Peterson informed her gravely that in his room were two pairs of shoes that needed cleaning, that he wanted extra washing done at once, and that he desired that the large bathtub be half filled with warm water, as he wanted to take a bath before his dinner, having been too lazy to take one when he rose. Mrs. Peterson followed with a few injunctions. And Olga only smiled and nodded.

"All these things," she answered, "already have I done."

Peterson rose, as she left. "What a girl, Matilda!" he reiterated. Seizing a piece of paper he hastily sketched two faces—one a bedraggled Irish girl; the other, Olga.

"Look on this picture and on that," he said. "Oh, for an Olga in New Jersey." He glanced at the ruin for an instant and then slapped his thigh. "Suppose," he ventured, "suppose, Matilda, we should take her back home with us, and forget Maggie. Think of it."

"But the expense," protested Mrs. Peterson. "It wouldn't pay."

Peterson frowned, "The expense," he mused. "Hang it! There's the trouble. It wouldn't pay. That's true."

He strode lazily toward the house and disappeared and took his bath. When he reappeared, looking fresh as a man does who has had a bath and knows it, the dinner was ready, spread daintily, under the tree and waiting for him.

Peterson had his hands full of mail. For Olga had found time while her dinner was preparing to run down to the little village and back again.

"Newspapers from home," said Peterson, drinking off a glass of rich new milk. "It's good to see them." Hastily he scanned their contents. Suddenly he sniffed with excitement. "Look here, Matilda," he said, "there's a rate war on among the steamship lines. Just look. They are landing immigrants in New York for ten, twelve, nine dollars—anything, almost. And it used to cost thirty-five." He paused. "By George," he continued, passing over the paper, "it's our very chance—to get Olga over to New Jersey, and to give Maggie the go-by. Jove, it's the very thing. Olga," he called. Olga came.

"Olga," he said, "how would you, to go back with us to the American United States enjoy yourself?"

Olga gave a little scream. "Oh—oh!" she gasped delightedly, "to America."

"Assuredly," returned Peterson, "would it not you please? You could there work only one-half the time. Half of two days in every week to yourself you could then have."

"And you we should pay," added Mrs. Peterson, "so much as ten dollars by the month."

Olga's eyes glistened. "Ten dollar," she repeated. "How much is she?"

They told her. Again she screamed with delight. It was fully four times what she was getting at Frau Ollendorff's.

"To go with you," she announced solemnly, "I should so much like. "Only," she concluded, shaking her head, "I fear it should be nothing but a dream."

In due time, back to New Jersey went the Petersons. And back with them went Olga—their new ten-dollar prize. And Peterson was lucky and sold all the pictures he had painted while abroad.

Olga was transported. "Just think," she told herself, up in the little servant's bedroom in the little Peterson house, "ten dollars—and for doing nothing almost. I am so glad—so glad—so glad."

Little by little Olga learned to talk after the manner of Jerseymen, and little by little became accustomed to the customs of the country.

"Olga," said Mrs. Peterson, "you may go out, you know, on Thursday—and on Saturday or Sunday afternoon, too, if you want to. And you must get acquainted with the other girls around here. Then you won't feel homesick, or so lonely."

Olga laughed. "I never homesick feel," she answered, "back to Frau Ollendorff I would not go."

But, nevertheless, she took advice, and gradually made the acquaintance of the neighborhood domestics—and then there came the crisis.

One night Olga charged into the presence of Peterson and his wife with fire in her eye.

"Swindlers," she exclaimed wrathfully, "swindlers—und liars—und thieves. Yes; I say it. Me, a poor innocent girl you would deceive. You—both of you. You brought me over here, and here I am. And what? You pay me ten dollars. Ten little dollars. Katie, next door she get twenty. Rosalie she get twenty-three. And no washing—no iron; nothing. And I—I am a slave. For ten little dollars. Bah."

"Swindlers—und liars—und thieves!"

For ten minutes Peterson and his wife, after recovering from their surprise, argued with her. But to no purpose. "Very well, Olga," they finally announced, "we'll pay you sixteen and send the washing out." Olga tossed her head.

"To-morrow," she answered, convincingly, "to-morrow you I leave. I have engaged already been by Mrs. Romaine—next block—at twenty-five a month; she say everybody wants Hungarian girl and she give anything to get one; she been watching me for six month; she want me; she going to have me; she pay twenty-five to get me." Peterson looked at his wife sadly. "Send for Maggie, dear," he said.

Amenities of War.

The amenities of war were being observed recently in the far East. The outposts of the two armies were so close together that they exchanged cigarettes, jack knives, and food with the utmost civility, and by tacit agreement the troops on either side disarmed and drank water from the same stream. Nothing disturbed the general harmony except an occasional dispute as to precedence at the river bank. This is quite in accordance with precedent. In several battles of the Franco-Prussian war the soldiers ran down to the same watering-place, and then returned to their positions to recommence slaughtering one another.

Sheep in Argentina.

Argentina has the greatest number of sheep of any country, but derives relatively the least benefit from them. This is due, in part, to the quality not having yet been sufficiently refined, due in part to negligence in the care of the sheep, and lastly to the prevalence of scab, the curing of which has not been made obligatory. In Australia curing this disease was made compulsory thirty years ago.

GOT A VOTE CHEAP.

Ingenious Flimflam Game Engineered by Electioneering Boss.

Israel Zangwill was in Philadelphia during the presidential election, and at the Franklin Inn, a literary club, he told a story of a crafty electioneering boss.

"This boss," he said, "desired votes for his candidate, and hesitated at nothing in order to get them. He sent for a poor man one day, and asked this man to vote as he desired.

"'Oh, no,' the poor man said firmly. 'Oh, no, I can't do that. I am already promised to the opposition.'

"'You are, eh?' said the boss. 'And how much is the opposition paying you?'

"'Twenty dollars,' the poor man answered.

"The boss assumed an expression of disgust.

"'That was a low price, my friend, an unfairly low price,' he said, 'to give you for your vote. We'd have done better by you. We'd have given you twenty-five dollars.'

"It was not yet too late. The election was two days off. The poor man wavered.

"'Would you?' he said. 'Would you?'

"'To be sure we would,' said the boss. 'Here, it isn't too late yet. Give me the other party's twenty and I'll give you our twenty-five now.'

"The poor man made the exchange joyfully, and thus the crafty boss had the satisfaction of causing his opponents to pay four-fifths of one of his own bribes."

Dying Rich.

Andrew Carnegie, at a reception, was asked by a young girl if he really believed that it was a disgrace to die rich.

Mr. Carnegie parried the question gracefully.

"Well," he said, "I should hate, after my death, to have such a speech made about me as an old cobbler once made about a millionaire.

"This millionaire had been notoriously close-fisted all his life. His tomb was a magnificent one, and on it was carved the Biblical verse:

"'He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.'

"The cobbler, having known the millionaire, took occasion to visit his tomb as soon as it was completed. He examined the monument carefully. Then he read aloud the verse upon it. Afterward he commented on the verse like this:

"'True, very true. But when that man died the Lord didn't owe him a cent.'"

The Tiger.

Now listen to a tiger tale,
  The tiger is a beast
Who would consider a wee boy
  Or girl or horse a feast.
He's just a cat grown awful big,
  He wears a striped skin.
A cat is not a tiger skin,
  But it's a tiger's kin.

There are so many tiger skins
  Made up in rugs, I vow
I think the jungle must be full
  Of skinless tigers now.
The tiger has two feet behind
  And also two before,
Most all the rest is tooth and lungs—
  You ought to hear him roar!

He's a nocturnal marauder
  With black bars on his hide
And yellow bars. He hunts by night,
  And woe, ah, woe betide
Poor luckless man! He goes to sleep
  Beneath the twinkling stars.
The tiger carries him away;
  He wakes behind the bars.

—Houston Post.

"Comrades" in Quarrel.

President Roosevelt keeps rather close track of the men who served in his regiment of rough riders. He greets them all effusively when they come to Washington and has helped many of them out of trouble. Not long ago Major Llewellyn of the rough riders, who now lives in New Mexico, was at the white house. The president was talking over old times with him. "By the way," the president said, "where is our old friend comrade Ritchie of the regiment?" "Oh," said Comrade Llewellyn, "Comrade Ritchie was out in Colorado until he got too gay. Then Comrade Sheriff Bell chased him out of the state."